

# HOUSTON COUNTY

**Honorable Brad Mendheim and Honorable John M. Steesland**

Houston County Courthouse  
P.O. Drawer 6406  
Dothan, AL 36302  
(334) 677-4848



Mary Paulk  
Melissa Medford  
Pam Soloman  
Fred Gray  
Tracy Nelson  
Dr. Hobbs  
Angela Underwood  
Peggy Blakeney  
Doug Valeska  
Lamar Glover  
Mark Culver  
Sheryl Walker  
Linda O'Connell  
Gerald Love  
Charlotte Williams  
Betty Peters  
Lori Gilley  
Locy Baker  
Warren Beck

Steve Clouse  
Joe Carothers  
Harri Anne Smith  
Jimmy W. Holley  
Charlotte Kirkland  
Phillip Calvert  
Keith Givens  
Connie Jenkins  
Susan Trawick  
Ed Dorsey  
Tony Gonzales  
Sheryl Walker  
Ed Enloe  
Jenny Stephens  
Wade Jones  
Virginia Jones  
Lori Gilley  
Jenny Stephens  
Joan Carpenter

Rosalind James  
Rearfield Vester  
Phyllis Lodgsdon  
Stacy Robinson  
Susie KingryCindy Skipper  
Ann Marie Schwartz  
Jaime Stuckey  
Linda Sanders  
Marian Loflin  
Rebeckah Troutman  
JoAn Avant-Breth  
Barbara Thorton  
Walt Bowers  
Jeanette K. Ellis  
Sharon McCray  
Berta Blackwell  
Kenneth J. Lord  
Debbie Riggs  
Lamar Glover

## Council Priorities

### **1. Accountability for juveniles.**

*Teen court is needed to assist juvenile court in holding teens accountable for their actions.*

### **2. Increase in methamphetamine use in Houston County affects multiple community sectors. Parents and the community at large lack awareness/knowledge regarding the dangers of meth production and use. Businesses that are affected by meth use- retailers, property owners, hotels, etc. also lack awareness of meth production and its effects on the environment.**

*Law enforcement, public health, mental health and other social service agencies will continue to collaborate on efforts to educate the community regarding the dangers of meth production and use. Education will be provided to merchants, community members (civic, church, etc.) land owners/property managers, emergency responders and other medical personnel, school systems, etc. Treatment and recovery efforts in the county will be supported. Provide support and encouragement to family members through support groups and education initiatives.*

### **3. Create an awareness of the world of work with emphasis on work ethic and job preparedness to include public, private, and home schooled children.**

*Inform and invite students 16-19 to attend a career fair. Assist in community awareness education through community volunteers.*

# Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county

## Early Care Education

Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

**Provide training and awareness to parents, center and home based care for the developmentally age appropriate education of children ages 0-5 years of age**

### Action Steps

- 1) Family Guidance Center training calendars.
- 2) Family Guidance Center training sessions.
- 3) Display of community brochures and training sessions.

**Provide training and awareness to families and the community on services available for special needs children ages 0-5 years of age. Services to include the areas of speech/language, physical and social/emotional development**

### Action Steps

- 1) Use brochures.
- 2) District coordinating council meeting.
- 3) Training schedule.
- 4) Other community partners events/activities.

**Provide education and awareness of safety practices to children, parents and childcare providers. To include abduction, child abuse indicators, drug and alcohol abuse in the home and domestic violence**

### Action Steps

- 1) Public awareness, brochures, and training sessions, counseling of family as a unit and parenting classes.

## **Economic Security**

Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

### **Lack of safe, affordable resources for low income families in the area of housing**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Identify safe, affordable housing in Houston County that is available to low income families based on income.
- 2) Include identified resources in the online community resource directory.

### **Lack of affordable and dependable resources for low income families in the area of childcare**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Work with Family Guidance Center.
- 2) Identify strategies to improve access and resources for subsidized childcare for low income families and working poor.
- 3) Work with local legislators to focus on statewide childcare funding for low income families and the working poor.

### **Lack of affordable and dependable resources for low income families in the area of transportation**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Participate in the locally developed transportation/JARC committee.
- 2) Develop strategies to improve transportation.
- 3) Work with legislators to focus on statewide transportation issues for low income families.

## **Education**

Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

### **Continue to promote the awareness of the importance of literacy**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Increase public awareness through medical coverage.
- 2) Continue and grow the literacy support of the county through civic groups, schools, businesses, and faith based organizations.
- 3) Mobilize investment into a reading promotion initiative of such value to all stakeholders that it will grow and continue to serve far beyond 2005-2006.

### **Create an awareness of the world of work with emphasis on work ethic and job preparedness to include public, private and home schooled children**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Inform and invite students ages 16-19 to attend a career fair.
- 2) Assist in community awareness education through community volunteers.

## Health

Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

### **Childhood obesity in Houston County will decline**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Engage/solicit support from pediatricians in community to assist in this issue.
- 2) Create support group for both parents and children and ped's offices.
- 3) Provide education to support participants utilizing community resources and agencies such as county extension, nutritionists, physical fitness educators, nurses.
- 4) Engage food industry to showcase healthy menu items and support group classes.
- 5) Follow up with school nurses on usefulness of the school resource guide developed by Houston Co. CPC.

## Parent Involvement Skills

Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

### **Increased internet/cyber net predators among preadolescents and teens. The number of children using the internet is on the rise. Parents/Guardians need to be educated on the dangers of websites, blogs, and networking sites**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Newspaper articles discussing sites and computer blogs and the lingo kids are using.
- 2) Hold workshops or attend PTO meetings to distribute information.

### **Lack of resources for parents for early interventions, parenting skills, after school and summer weekend, school holiday, and intercession programs**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Family Fun Day: area organizations will have booths distributing information on their services.
- 2) Create stronger collaborations among all agencies providing after school activities for youth.
- 3) Create and distribute available services for parents.

## Safety

Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

### **Increase in methamphetamine use in Houston County affecting multiple community sectors**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Continue community education regarding the dangers of meth production, use and addiction.
- 2) Training will be provided to community groups, faith based organizations, business, child care and education in order to increase awareness regarding the consequences of meth use.

## **Lack of alternative activities for youth**

### **Action Steps**

- 1) Support and encourage activities that are tobacco, alcohol and drug free.

## **Juveniles need to be held accountable for their actions**

### **Action Steps**

- 1) Continue to seek funding for teen court.

# **Policy Recommendations**

No Policy Recommendations submitted